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W E D N E S D A Y H I G H L I G H T S

- + Secretary-General, in message to Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, says comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty would boost process of nuclear disarmament and international peace and security.
- + Interpol tells Committee on Rights of Child of need to improve cooperation with United Nations to prevent offences against children; seeks coordinated training courses at regional or national level.
- + IFAD President says Fund is imaginative and effective force in alleviating rural poverty and hunger; says IFAD innovations are essential to sustainable development.
- + Two-day meeting of eminent persons on population and development, jointly organized by United Nations University and UNFPA, opens in Tokyo; part of preparation for International Conference on Population and Development to be held in Cairo in September.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, in a message to the Conference on Disarmament which began its 1994 session in Geneva yesterday, welcomed its emphasis on negotiations for a universal and verifiable comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty. Such a treaty would contribute effectively to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, to the process of nuclear disarmament, and to international peace and security, he said. It would also assist the 1995 review of the existing Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

The Secretary-General noted that the Conference would give priority to the question of arrangements to reassure non-nuclear weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. "Admittedly, the best guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is the total elimination of nuclear weapons from the face of the earth," he said. However, unless that goal was realized, it was important to develop effective security assurances as an essential element in a régime for the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

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The General Assembly's forty-eighth session had confirmed a trend towards cooperation among Members States in the vital area of security, arms limitation and disarmament, as exemplified by the growing number of resolutions adopted by consensus in this field, he continued. The resolution on the comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty, sponsored by more than 157 Member States, was a milestone in the efforts of the international community to ban all nuclear tests in all environments for all time.

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The International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol) wants greater cooperation with the United Nations to prevent offences committed against children and to assist child victims. Addressing the Committee on the Rights of the Child in Geneva yesterday, Sabine Manke, Specialist Officer of the General Secretariat of Interpol, said that was one of the recommendations of a group of experts convened in 1991 by Interpol to study offences committed against children. There could also be greater cooperation in the areas of crime statistics and the training of police personnel to deal with child victims.

The Officer said Interpol's Standing Working Party on Offences against Minors had prepared a plan of action calling for the appointment of training coordinators from Interpol and the United Nations; the holding of a preparatory seminar on training with respect to children; and the organization of regional or national training courses. Members of the Committee welcomed the proposed plan of action and suggested further discussions on its implementation, taking into account the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

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The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) has earned international recognition as an imaginative and effective force in alleviating rural poverty and hunger, according to IFAD President Faswi Al-Sultain. Addressing the opening session of IFAD's Governing Council meeting in Rome today, he said IFAD was striving to ensure that a higher percentage of its resources went to the poor and the hungry.

Mr. Al-Sultain said project innovations championed by IFAD were essential if sustainable development was to be achieved at the community level. The Fund had always sought to influence the activities of other development agencies so as to give greater attention to the needs of the poor, and would seek to mobilize their resources in support of its projects. He noted, however, that while poverty was increasingly recognized as the central development challenge, the means to combat it were not abundant.

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A two-day meeting of eminent persons on population and development opened today at the United Nations University in Tokyo. Jointly organized by the University and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), it is being held in conjunction with preparations for the International Conference on Population

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and Development to be held in Cairo in September this year. The Government of Japan is co-sponsoring the meeting.

Amongst those expected to attend are some 20 distinguished individuals from around the world who have been active in the fields of population, development and international cooperation. They include Gro Harlem Brundtland, Prime Minister of Norway; Miguel de la Madrid Hurtado, former President of Mexico; Takeo Fukuda, former Prime Minister of Japan; Gertrude Mongella, Secretary-General of the 1995 World Conference of Women; and Fred Sai, President of the International Planned Parenthood Federation. The topics of discussion include the key issues of the Cairo Conference: population, food and security; population and sustainable development; population and family planning activities; population and the status of women; and population distribution and migration.

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